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C O N F I D E N T I A L BRATISLAVA 000281

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [EUN](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [CU](#) [LO](#)
SUBJECT: JUNE GAERC: SLOVAKIA SUPPORTS LIFTING SANCTIONS ON
CUBA; CONCERNED ABOUT UN-EU IMPASSE ON KOSOVO

REF: STATE 62450

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission, Lawrence Silverman for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary. Poloff delivered reftel points to MFA European Correspondent Albin Otruba on June 12. Otruba predicted the GAERC will drop Restrictive Measures against Cuba, but also will send a strong pro-democracy message. Slovakia supports this stance, with the proviso that there be an annual review of progress in Cuba. On Kosovo, given the current impasse between the UN and the EU, Otruba said the Slovaks did not see how an UNMIK-EULEX transition could be implemented anytime soon. End summary.

¶2. (C) On the Balkans, Otruba lamented the UN's problematic stance on the UNMIK-EULEX transition and the resultant complications. From the Slovak perspective, a deal between Serbia and the EU would be sufficient and "a good step." However, he recognized such an approach would not be accepted by others, including EU members such as France and UK, as it would call into question Kosovo's status. Although Otruba thought EULEX could deploy to southern Kosovo anytime, such a move would foster the division of Kosovo and Slovakia is firmly against de-facto partition. Eight Slovak police officers are due to be sent to EULEX, with one already present in country.

¶3. (C) With respect to Cuba, Slovakia continues to support a pro-democracy stance and believes that lifting sanctions could promote positive change. Pol/Econ Chief also delivered Cuba points in a separate meeting with Zdenek Rozhold, the Deputy Director for Latin American Affairs at MFA. Rozhold said the Slovaks support a review after one year to determine if there has been sufficient progress. Rozhold stressed that Slovakia would continue to press for the unconditional release of political prisoners, ratification and implementation by Cuba of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The GOS would continue to provide practical support to the "peaceful" opposition. He stated that the changes Raul Castro have implemented so far were wholly inadequate, but stressed a belief the best chance to move the regime to meaningful change was through dialogue.

¶4. (C) Pol/Chief inquired about the status of the bilateral economic cooperation agreement the Slovak Government approved earlier this year. Rozhold said the Cuban side was still reviewing the document and that he expected the agreement would probably not be signed until the fall. Comment: Cuba policy -- and to what extent the human rights agenda should be stressed -- has been a source of tension within the government, particularly since FM Kubis dressed down PM Fico for his attendance at Cuba's national day reception in January. We were pleased that the MFA convened a roundtable on May 27 to discuss GOS Cuba policy that included the leader of Parliament's Human Rights Committee and NGOS who have supported democratization in Cuba. According to NGO

representatives who participated in the meeting, the discussion was open and constructive. The presence of Economy Ministry reps at the meeting makes clear, however, the government is determined to boost commercial ties with Cuba, too.

OBSITNIK